







[See p. 9

"THE GIANTS ALL WOKE UP, AND EACH ONE RUSHED TO A WINDOW"

SIX GIANTS AND
A GRIFFIN
AND OTHER
STORIES

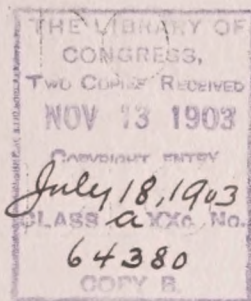
BY
BIRDSALL OTIS EDEY

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R. H. RUSSELL
1903



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By ROBERT HOWARD RUSSELL

Published November, 1903

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TO
MY LITTLE GIRL

LAY away the story,—
 Though the theme is sweet,
There's a lack of something yet
 Leaves it incomplete;—
There's a nameless yearning—
 Strangely undefined—
For a story sweeter still
 Than the written kind.

Therefore read no longer,—
 I've no heart to hear,
But just something you make up,
 O my mother dear,—
With your arms around me,
 Hold me, folded-eyed,—
Only let your voice go on—
 I'll be satisfied.

James Whitcomb Riley.

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SIX GIANTS AND A GRIFFIN

SIX GIANTS AND A GRIFFIN

GNOMES were Teddy's favorites. He had no brothers and sisters, so was obliged to make up games for himself, and invent people to play with him, and the people were almost always gnomes.

At the foot of the lawn which stretched before the house where he lived, stood an oak-tree. This tree was so old that the trunk was quite hollow, and Teddy could squeeze inside it by making himself small. It was here that all his wonderful adventures began. He always went to the oak every morning, vaguely hoping at sometime to catch sight of a belated elf, who might be lurking about after the day had really begun.

It had been raining for two days, and Teddy had been kept indoors with a cold, which he hated very much, so on the third morning, when Mamma allowed him to run out for a little while he made all haste to the oak-tree, because he felt that something would be changed and he was quite dissappointed to find everything looking just as usual. But when he went inside, however, there was a difference; a small trap door, with a brass ring in it, had appeared in the bottom of the tree.

Teddy was delighted, as he was sure the door had not been there two days ago, and he couldn't imagine what it was for. In a minute he was trying to get it open, tugging at the brass ring as hard as he could. It was a tough struggle, but the door yielded at last, and so suddenly that Teddy fell over backward out through the opening of the tree. He didn't mind that, and was up in a jiffy, looking down the black hole which he had uncovered.

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At first he couldn't see anything, then gradually made out some steps, at the bottom of which it seemed to be lighter. Ted hesitated, it was dark at the top, and he didn't know how far away the light might be, but he made up his mind to go down, and he went cautiously, backward, as on a ladder. It was a long flight. When he reached the bottom step at last, he saw that the light came from an opening at the end of the passage, and was much farther off than it looked, but he kept on and when at last he arrived where it was brighter, he found himself in a new and strange country.

To his surprise everything was blue,—grass, leaves on the trees, flowers, all a deep, lovely blue, like the sea. Teddy stared about in much astonishment. There was no one in sight, but he heard a sort of soft, humming sound, like people singing. It seemed to come from the left, so he ran off in that direction, and on turning a corner, saw a hill in front of him, up which he climbed, and there the funniest sight met his eyes.

Below, in a round clearing, was an open-air workshop. Tools of all kinds stood about, and in the center of a furnace in full blast, and hard at work were hundreds of little, blue gnomes. They were all hammering, sawing, and planing, making wooden tables and chairs of a very curious kind that Teddy had never seen before. They kept up an odd, chanting song, as they worked, and this was what Teddy had heard. The words were something like these:

“Let us sing as we work,
As hard as we're able,
Let us sing as we finish
Each chair, and each table.

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The giants will come,
If we cease from our song,
And eat us all up,
So sing, sing along."

Another curious thing Teddy noticed, was the presence of about a hundred blue elephants. They walked in solemn procession around the outskirts of the open space, each one holding with his trunk the tail of the one in front of him. Occasionally, the largest would put up his trunk and trumpet, and then they all would do the same, solemnly turn around, and walk the other way.

While Teddy stood watching these strange sights one of the gnomes, who seemed to be an overseer, looked up and saw him. He gave a cry, which was echoed by the others, then with one accord they stopped working, ran up the hill, and threw themselves on the ground before Teddy, shouting.

"He has come, he has come, our preserver, our preserver!" Teddy was a good deal embarrassed at this reception, and didn't know exactly what to say, so he took off his hat, and bowed very politely, and said nothing. The gnomes, on the contrary, talked all the time, and all together, which made a great deal of noise, and was pretty confusing. Teddy heard the word "giant," again and again, also the word "kill," and he wondered if he were to kill a giant, and if so, with what. After a while, they seemed to realize that he didn't understand so they all fell back a little way, and the leader, the one who had given notice of Teddy's arrival, stepped forward and said:

"Teddy, we are glad to see you. We have watched you for a long, long time, and always hoped to have a visit from you,

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but we were obliged to wait before putting up the steps and the trap door, until you yourself had expressed a desire to help us, which you did last Saturday. Perhaps you remember saving one of my people from being killed by a cat on Saturday."

Teddy looked puzzled. "It was a frog I saved," he said. "Topsy was going to eat it, and I was afraid she would get sick."

"It was *not* a frog," said the gnome with much displeasure, "you may have *thought* it was a frog, but it was not." He seemed so put out that Teddy felt himself growing very red and embarrassed.

"I am sure I am very sorry," he said, "and I am glad I was able to help you."

The gnome continued, but with much severity, "you then said, after you had driven away the savage animal,—"

"Topsy is not a savage animal," interrupted Ted, "she is a very nice cat."

"She is a savage animal to us," said the gnome, and all the other gnomes repeated, "savage animal," in a sort of a growl.

"As I was saying," the gnome went on, "after having driven away the savage animal, you said you wished you could be like the celebrated "Jack the Giant-Killer," and then we decided you would help us, and we put up the steps and door."

"What am I to do, now that I am here?" asked Teddy, much perplexed, "am I to kill a giant?"

"You are to kill six," replied the gnome, calmly, while a joyful chorus of "*six*" came from the hundreds of little gnomes standing by.

"Six," echoed Teddy, faintly, "I—I don't think I could kill six, I'm not sure I could kill *one*, alone."

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“*Not* kill the six giants,” said the gnome, in a voice of anger and surprise, “then why did you come?”

“I don’t know,” and Teddy began to wish heartily that he had never found the trap door, and never visited Gnome-land.

There was a long silence, in which Teddy shifted his feet, twisted his cap into a string, and felt very unhappy and awkward. Then the silence was broken by the biggest gnome, who came a little closer to Teddy, and said, calmly, but firmly;

“You expressed a wish to kill a giant, here there are six, who come every night, when we are asleep and cannot sing, and when our elephants are obliged to leave us to attend to their other duties. When we wake in the morning, we find our work all undone and broken, our tools made useless, and often many of our number killed. You must rid us of these pests, and if you cannot think of a way now, you must remain here in captivity until you do.” So speaking he led Teddy to a cave in the side of the hill, and pushed him in.

“When you are ready,” he said, “you have only to blow this whistle loudly, twice, and you will be released,” then the door closed, and Teddy found himself alone.

For a few minutes all he heard was the pattering of hundreds of little feet, going down the hill, then the chanting song commenced again, and he knew that they had gone back to their work.

Teddy was thoroughly frightened; he had no idea how to kill giants, though he had often thought about it, but now that the chance had come he couldn’t think of a single way to accomplish it, and after a while he began to cry. While he was

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crying very hard, he heard a scratchy sound, and looking up, saw a little red squirrel, coming in through a crack in the cave. The squirrel winked very solemnly with one bright eye, and then remarked,

“I wouldn’t cry if I were you.”

“What would you do?” said Ted, rather put out by the squirrel’s tone.

“I’d go to work,” was the answer, delivered with another wink.

“I don’t know how to,” said Teddy, “and I can’t get out if I did know.”

“You must find Mamma Know-all,” said the squirrel whisking his tail, “she will help you, she knows you well, she is in your house a lot of the time.”

“At my house?” said Teddy, much surprised, “whereabouts?”

“That would be telling,” and the squirrel winked again.

Teddy rose to his feet, “Let us go and find her at once,” he said, “if I have to do this thing there is no use in waiting any longer.”

“Now you are acting with some sense,” said the squirrel, “blow your whistle and tell them you must be let out any way, that you can’t think locked up, and then start to your left, thro’ the woods and I will join you,” with that he scurried into the darkness, and disappeared.

Teddy then blew his whistle twice, loudly, and instantly the door opened, and he walked out. No one was in sight, so he obeyed the squirrel’s instructions, and ran to the woods, where the squirrel joined him. He walk quite a long way with little

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“Red-tail” sitting on his shoulder, and at last arrived at a house, on the side of a steep hill. Here “Red-tail” got down from Teddy’s shoulder, and hid in a tree.

“I don’t like Mamma Know-all,” he said, “you can talk to her.”

So Teddy knocked at the door, and a funny, little old woman came out. Teddy told her his troubles, and she agreed to help him.

“I’ve known for a long time how to kill the giants,” she said, “but nobody has ever thought to ask me to help, and I can’t think why they supposed a little boy like you could do it without me. I’m going to give you three oranges, which you must peel as you need them. The Looking-glass Sea is at the top of this hill, and the giants live on the other side of the Sea. Do not use the oranges unless you have to, and above all things, do not step on the peel.”

Teddy thanked her very much, took the oranges, and began promptly to climb the hill, where the squirrel was waiting for him.

They soon reached the top, and before them, stretched the Looking-glass Sea. Directly opposite stood the gray castle belonging to the six giants. It had six enormous doors, six enormous windows, one over each door, and also six chimneys. It stood so close to the edge of the sea, that Teddy saw its reflection quite clearly, which made it seem twice its real size. He stared at the castle in hopeless despair.

“They must be large giants,” he said.

“They are,” answered the squirrel, “the very largest.”

“I suppose I’d better cross the sea,” remarked Teddy.

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"I suppose you'd better *try* to cross the sea," said the squirrel.

So Teddy put one foot on the edge, then the other foot and then he took one step, and then he landed flat on his back with a most awful thump. This both surprised and hurt him, and he crawled on his hands and knees to the bank, feeling discouraged.

"I think I had better peel an orange," he said, "I'll never be able to walk over."

The squirrel agreed to this, and they did it together, being very careful to throw the peel behind them, so that they should not step on it.

Just as they finished, the orange slipped from Teddy's hand, skipped off on the sea, and turned into a pair of beautiful big wheels, all nicely rubber tired, like bicycle wheels, and with a little seat swung in between them. Teddy was much delighted, and lost no time in taking the seat. The wheels instantly began to roll over the sea, and when he was very nearly across he saw to his horror, looming up on the opposite bank, a very large bright green Griffin, with a long scaly tail, and very big claws. The wheels seemed to be as frightened as Teddy, for they stopped short, and Teddy and the Griffin looked at each other. Finally the Griffin roared at him.

"What do you want here boy?" Teddy didn't wish to say what he really wanted, so he gave a pleasant smile, and said:

"I came to see you." The Griffin looked as if he didn't believe that, and invited Teddy ashore, but Teddy was not to be caught so easily, and *he* invited the Griffin to come out on the Looking-glass Sea. This the Griffin refused to do, and

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Teddy asked the wheels to wheel him as close to the bank as was safe, which they did, then the little seat lowered him to the ice, and the wheels disappeared.

Teddy sat there and looked at the Griffin, and wondered what the next move should be, when it suddenly occurred to him that it was time to use another orange. There was no place to leave the peel except on the sea, but the squirrel managed to carry the pieces quite off to the right, so that they wouldn't be in the way.

When Teddy had finished peeling, the orange slipped out of his hand, just as the other had done, shot to the bank, and promptly turned into a dozen little cakes.

"Have some cake," said Teddy.

"You come and hand them to me," said the Griffin.

"No, you reach them for yourself," said Teddy, "they are near the edge."

Now the Griffin liked cakes, very much indeed, and these had pink frosting on them, and looked very delicious, so he gingerly leaned over the edge, and took one, and finding it good, ate them all.

Just as he finished the last one, he began to bellow and roar, and made such a noise that the giants all woke up, and each one rushed to a window, and pushed out his head.

Now these giants were very peculiar. Each had different colored hair, and a great deal of it,—the first one black, the second brown, the third white, the fourth yellow, the fifth red and the sixth bright green. As they stuck out their heads, each through his own window, they presented a very fascinating and yet, awful appearance. They seemed much upset at hearing the

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griffin roar and see him stagger around, and they shouted to him all together.

“What *is* the matter? What *has* happened?”

“I’m killed,” said the Griffin, “and by that dreadful little boy. Come out and put an end to him,” and with that he exploded, and flew up into the sky, like a big green cloud.

The giants screamed with rage, and calling to Teddy to wait till they came down, each drew in his head and disappeared: But they re-appeared in a minute, armed with enormous clubs, and were soon at the edge of the sea.

“Come here,” they called, “come here, you young rascal,” and shook their sticks at him, but Teddy sat where he was, and laughed, they looked so funny, all standing on the bank, with their different colored hair.

Finally the one with the red hair became so angry that he stepped on the Looking-glass Sea, and put his foot on the orange peel that the squirrel had laid in a nice heap. His feet flew out from under him just as Teddy’s had done, and he came down with such an awful crash that he went right through and disappeared.

“There’s one gone,” said the squirrel, pleased “and easily too. Now how about the other five?”

“I don’t know,” said Teddy doubtfully, “had I better peel the last orange?”

“I suppose you had,” said the squirrel, “it’s your last chance, and if it doesn’t work, we’re lost.”

Teddy nodded as he was too busy to answer. He was throwing the pieces of peel at the giants, and as he threw them they turned into little sharp stones, and hit them, and hurt them

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and that made them still more angry, and they called all the louder to him, but they didn't dare step on the sea.

When Teddy finished the Orange he laid it carefully down beside him, and waited to see what would happen. For at least five minutes it stayed where he had put it, and then it disappeared and Teddy began to be awfully frightened, when all of a sudden he heard a very strange sound, and turned to look in the direction from which it came. The sound continued drawing nearer and nearer. It was a funny noise, swishy and squashy, now faint, now loud, but surely coming closer all the time. The giants heard it, and grew uneasy; they pressed to the shore of the sea, and threatened Teddy more and more with their clubs.

Suddenly, just as Teddy had begun to think Mammy-Know-all had gone back on him altogether, a cloud of great white birds appeared, thousands of them, all flapping their wings together, till it sounded like the roll of drums. They descended upon the giants, pecking them with their bills, and smothering them with their wings, till the giants in desperation, ran out on the sea, and all fell through!

The very second the green one sank out of sight, the Looking-glass Sea turned into water, and Teddy and the Squirrel were glad enough to scramble into a piece of orange peel which had turned into a little yellow boat.

Just as they were wondering which way they ought to go they heard a great hullabaloo from the opposite shore, and there were all the gnomes, ranged along the bank, shouting and waving at Teddy, begging him to make haste over, that they might crown him their king.

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But Teddy didn't want to go over, he didn't want to be a king, he was tired of the gnomes, and their blue elephants, and their hollow trees, and he didn't propose to go back, and be told to kill anything more, so he asked the squirrel if he knew how he could get home some other way, and the squirrel said, "shut your eyes, and say:

One, two, three,
Oak tree, oak tree,"

It was no sooner said than done, and immediately he found himself in the hollow oak, at the foot of the steps, and lost no time in climbing to the top. As he shut the trap door behind him, he heard the shouts of the gnomes, calling him to come back, and be their king, but he and the squirrel fastened the trap door in its place, *quickly*, and then a very funny thing happened.

The squirrel who had been so friendly just the minute before, suddenly became very wild, and ran chattering out of the oak-tree, and though Teddy ran after him, called him, begged him to come back, reminded him of the lovely time they had just had, he only ran further away, and finally disappeared up a beach-tree leaving Teddy standing disconsolately at the foot, wondering whether the thing had really happened, or whether it was all a dream!

GERTRUDE'S VISIT TO THE MOON

DID you ever hear of a little girl so fond of looking at the moon, that she quite forgot to obey her mother and stay in bed, if she thought there was a chance of watching the big silver globe, as it hung in the sky? Well, I am going to tell you about this little girl.

Her name was Gertrude; she was nine years old, and looked much the same as other little girls of nine, and was just about as tall. Except for her love of the moon, she was only an ordinary little girl, with hair to be curled, lessons to learn and all such unpleasant things to attend to.

One night Gertrude's mamma had tucked her safely in bed and left her with a kiss, and she lay wondering whether the moon were shining, as it seemed very dark, and whether she dared get up for one peep or not, when bang! away went the window shade, right to the top, without any warning, and instantly the room was filled with a silver light.

Gertrude sat up and softly put first one foot out of bed, then the other, and running to the window, looked out. There was the moon gazing down at her with what seemed a kindly smile on its broad face, and from it came straight to her window, a beautiful band of white light, like a sort of fairy bridge.

"Oh, dear," sighed Gertrude, "I feel as though I could walk up that lovely bridge, if I had a moon boy or girl to help me."

As she spoke she noticed something sliding towards her, down the silvery band, very fast, and while she looked, it grew bigger and bigger, until it landed on the roof of the Piazza,

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when she saw that it was a white sled, and on it there was the prettiest little girl she had ever seen. She was of about the same size as Gertrude, and was dressed all in shimmery white ; even her long hair was such a pale yellow as to be silver. She smiled at Gertrude and approached the window holding out her hand.

“I am Amorita,” she said, “and I have come from the Crown Prince ; it is his birthday, and he bids me invite you to his party in the moon.”

Gertrude's face was alight all in a minute with joy, and she cried :

“The Crown Prince ! oh, I should love to go with you, Amorita, but I am not dressed, I have on my nightgown.”

“Never mind,” said the moon child, “that will be arranged later, you will see. Climb out of the window, and come with me.”

Gertrude needed no more urging ; in a second she had jumped on a chair, and then out to the piazza roof, and seated herself on the sled.

“How can we slide up hill, Amorita?” she asked. And Amorita answered, as she clapped her hands together ; “Wait, watch and see.”

Gertrude watched, and in a minute two beautiful white moths appeared, flying slowly and gracefully towards them. They stopped in front of the sled, and Amorita seizing the white reins that hung from their harness, they started swiftly up the shaft of light, drawn by the even motion of the fluffy white wings.

Up, up, up, until they reached a pair of beautiful white



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gates, which were opened by another moth, and they found themselves in front of the Moon Palace. They went straight into a magnificent ballroom, full of people all in white, who were dancing to the music of a band of white mice playing on silver instruments. At the end of the room, on a huge throne, sat the King and Queen, and at their feet sat the Crown Prince, who, when he saw the children coming, rose, and with an exclamation of joy, ran to meet them.

“Oh, Gertrude,” he cried, “I have watched you often from my window and I love you very much. I have waited so long to have you come,” and he kissed her on the cheek. Gertrude thought of her nightgown and felt herself blushing very red, but on looking down, she saw she had on a silver dress and shoes, and she felt happy again.

The Crown Prince led her to the King and Queen, and they greeted her with sweet smiles of welcome, bade her dance, and enjoy herself. The Prince told how much he wanted her to stay in his world, that when he and she both grew up they should get married, and be King and Queen of the moon people.

While they were talking about it, a trumpet blew, and everybody stopped dancing, and formed a procession, headed by two white rabbits, blowing on silver horns ; then came the band, then the King and Queen and behind them the Crown Prince, with Gertrude on one side, and Amorita on the other, and behind them all the ladies and gentlemen of the court.

The dining hall was reached at last and here stood a long table, in the centre of which was a large birthday cake, with twelve candles, each burning in a silver rose. The Crown Prince sat opposite the cake, with Gertrude next to him.

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In the middle of the feast, the Prince rose, and introduced her to all his people, as his little bride, and they cheered, and drank her health out of big round glasses with the Man in the Moon painted on them. Then he cut the cake, and in Gertrude's piece was a little white satin box, and in the box a lovely pearl ring. The Prince was just putting it on her finger, when she felt herself slipping, slipping, and before she knew what had happened,—she was in bed, and her mamma was standing, looking at her, with a smile.

“Many happy returns of the day, little girl,” said she. “Look what your Uncle John has sent you,” and she handed her a little box. In it was a ring, just like the ring the Crown Prince was giving her when she fell out of the moon.

“Oh, mamma, that is my engagement ring,” cried Gertrude, and as mamma looked very much puzzled, she hastened to explain.

Mamma seemed to think it was a dream, but Gertrude likes to think it was not, and nights when the moon is full, she stands at the window, and waves her hand,—the hand with the ring on it,—and she believes the Crown Prince sees her and waves back, even though she cannot see him.

B. O. E.

JANE AND THE BEARS

JANE loved to read, and above all, to read fairy tales. She had a great number of books, of every kind, but the one she liked best was "The Three Bears." Her copy of the book had very large, bright pictures of Silverlocks, the Bears and the little house. The story was printed in nice, big, plain letters, so that Jane had no trouble in reading it to herself when Mamma was too busy to read it for her. Jane lived on the outskirts of a wood, and it was her great pleasure to go into it a little way, and sit down at the foot of an oak-tree, read about the Bears, and fancy they were alive, and talking to her.

One day she had been dreaming thus for a long time, when suddenly she felt that the Bears were real, and that by going into the woods a long way, she could find them just as Silverlocks had found them. So she shut up the book, tucked it under her arm, and ran down a little narrow path just ahead of her. After she had been running quite a while, she became very much out of breath, for Jane was a fat little girl, so she stopped and looked about her. It seemed rather dark, the trees grew so thickly and she felt a little bit frightened, but one look at the beloved book, still tucked firmly under her arm, spurred her to venture further before giving up hope altogether. But the further she went, the darker it grew, and Jane suddenly realized that it must be getting night, and then,—she tried to go home, and couldn't find the way. Finally after trying for some time, she sat down by a big tree, and burst into tears.

While she was crying very bitterly, she thought she heard a noise, a sort of scrunchy sound, like a heaving body walking.

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She put out her hand and felt something furry. She gave a scream and started to run away, when a big voice, quite kind, but oh, so big and gruff, said :

“Little girl, why do you cry ?”

Jane answered very timidly, “I cry because I am lost.”

“Lost,” echoed the big voice, “where were you going”?

“To find the Three bears,” sobbed Jane, “and I can’t find them.”

“The Three Bears,” roared the voice, “why, I am Mr. Bear, what do you want with us ?”

Jane came quite close to him, and peered at him through the darkness. Mr. Bear, sure enough, big, hairy, and brown, just like the pictures ! Jane quite forgot her manners in the excitement of the minute, and clasping her two little, fat hands together, cried,

“Oh, are you truly real bears ?”

“*Real bears* ?” roared Mr. Bear, in a voice of thunder, “of course we’re real bears. What an insulting question ! I ought to punish you well for that. *Real bears*, indeed !” and he roared louder than ever.

Poor Jane was frightened to death. She sat down on the ground, and screamed, “Oh, Mr. Bear, I’m so sorry. I will be good, oh, I will be good. Please don’t eat me up !”

Mr. Bear grew more gentle when he saw how penitent she was, and told her if she would climb on his back, he would take her to Mrs. Bear and the Baby Bear who were waiting for him. Jane was a little doubtful about accepting the invitation, he was such a large bear, and she was such a little girl, a nice, fat morsel, too,—she had been told so before by her Papa,—still



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the temptation was very great, so she climbed on his broad back, settled herself comfortably, and off they started.

They journeyed quite a long way, and finally it became lighter, and the trees grew further apart, until they came to a clearing, and there, right in the very middle, stood the little house, with its three doors, its three windows, its three chimneys, so like the pictures in her book, that Jane almost fell off the bear's back, when she saw it. They stopped in front of one of the doors, and out ran the Baby Bear. When he saw Jane sitting on his father's back, he gave a funny little squeal, and hurried into the house, calling,

"Oh, Mamma, Mamma, put away my chair, and my blue bowl, here's another horrid little girl, come with Pa, and I'm sure she will break them again. She's much bigger than the other one."

Mamma Bear went to the door. She looked just like the pictures too, and had a bonnet with strings tied under her chin.

"Mercy me, Pa," she said, "who have you brought now?"

"It's a little girl," said Mr. Bear, "I found her in the woods, hunting for our house. She's a silly child,"—this very severely—"she believed that we were not real".

Mamma Bear gave a violent roar of rage, and said: "Of course we are real," in her middle-sized voice, which was not so squeaky as the Baby Bear's voice, and not so gruff as Papa Bear's. Jane hastened to apologize again, and begged to be allowed to see the inside of the house, and as Mamma Bear was very good-natured, she took her in.

Jane saw the big chair, that was so hard, the middle-sized chair, that was so soft, and the little chair, that Silverlocks had

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broken, and it was all mended with string. She wanted to sit in it but the Baby Bear made such a fuss, she gave up the attempt. They showed her the great, big bowl full of very peppery soup, the middle-sized bowl full of very salty soup, and the Baby Bear's bowl, which was mended with glue. He let Jane taste a little of his soup, just a *very* little, because he was afraid she would take it all, and he would have none.

Then they invited her upstairs, and showed her all the beds, and these she was allowed to try. She had a great deal of trouble getting up on Mr. Bear's bed, it was so high, and when she did succeed she was glad to get down again, for it was just as hard now as when Silverlocks had found it. The middle-sized bed she passed by almost without looking at it, she was so anxious to get to Baby Bears bed, and see where Silverlocks had gone to sleep on that eventful day.

Then they showed the window through which Silverlocks had jumped out, and the Baby Bear hopefully suggested that Jane could do the same, if she liked! When they went downstairs again, Mamma Bear gave Jane some nice little cakes she had baked.

Jane thought she ought to go home, but didn't know how to go. Mr. Bear said he couldn't possibly take her, it was much too far. Mamma said *she* couldn't possibly take her, because she was much too fat, and Baby Bear said she couldn't possibly stay where she was because he couldn't think of letting her sleep in his bed. So it seemed for a little while as though Jane would never get home. Suddenly Mamma Bear had an idea.

"Why don't you call in Red Riding-Hood's wolf? He goes by every day, and perhaps he will know how she can get out of the forest."

JANE AND THE BEARS

So they all went in front of the house, and waited. Jane and the Baby Bear played games, only the Baby Bear could climb trees, and Jane couldn't, so in hide-and-go-seek he was able to get away quite easily.

Pretty soon they heard a galloping sound, and up came a big, gray wolf. Papa Bear explained to him what they wanted. The wolf was delighted, but said he had to go first to the Grandmother's cottage, because Red Riding-hood was there, and he had a message to give from her mother, but if Jane didn't mind going too, why, it would be all right. You can easily imagine Jane was most willing, so they put her on the wolf's back, after the Baby Bear had hugged her "good-bye".

The wolf went much faster than the Bear, and Jane had great difficulty in staying on his back, but she managed not to fall off, and soon they arrived at the Grandmother's cottage, and found the grandmother and Red Riding-hood positively sitting down to supper. They invited Jane to have a little of the delicious cream cheese, and fresh cake which she was very glad to do. While she was eating she confided to the Grandmother her troubles about getting home, and Grandmother said if Jane would take off her clothes, and get right into bed she would be home in a jiffy. As Jane was rather tired, she didn't mind doing this at all. She shut her eyes, just as Grandma told her to, and while she lay there, she could still hear them talking, and she heard them say:

"Jane, Jane, Jane," and it sounded very familiar, too, it sounded like Nurse. Why! it couldn't be Nurse! How could she have come there? Then Jane thought she would have to open her eyes, and so she did,—and there she was sitting at the bottom of the tree, with her book in her lap, and it *was* Nurse's voice she heard, and it meant "supper."

SAPPHIRA AND THE FLYING PIG

SAPPHIRA'S mamma and papa owned a flying pig. Of course people who have not had a flying pig in the family do not know how uninteresting they are. Sapphira knew, and the Flying Pig was a great trial to her. In the first place, he was locked up in a large wire cage so that he couldn't possibly fly, then he was watched all the time by two little page boys, so that nothing could ever disturb or annoy him, and he was never taken out except when the family were giving a party, and he was called on to entertain the guests. Sapphira often longed to play with him, he seemed as if he would be quite a decent playfellow, but he was asleep most of the time, so that she had grown accustomed to expect nothing much of him. Of course she went every day, on her way down to the beach, and said "Good morning, Flying Pig," respectfully, because after all you had to be respectful to a pig that could fly if it wanted to, and he always responded, "Good morning, Sapphira," but he never budged, and he never said more than that, so Sapphira would leave him, and go on with her pail and shovel to dig in the sand.

At the beach Sapphira had some real friends, and they were the Walruses. To be sure they couldn't be frightfully intimate because they were unable to come in shore for fear of running aground in the shallow water, so they stayed just outside the breakers and bobbed up and down over the waves, their great tusks gleaming in the sunlight, and as their voices were very loud they could talk to Sapphira easily as she sat on the beach. They were always very anxious for her to come

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out and see then, and they had promised her the loveliest time if she could only spend the day, but there was always the difficulty of her getting out through the breakers to them, as she couldn't swim, so they had been obliged to give it up.

One morning, just as Sapphira had finished a most beautiful fort with a trench all around it into which the water would flow when the tide came in, the oldest Walrus shouted to her,

"Sapphira, hasn't your father a flying Pig?"

"Yes," said Sapphira.

"Well, why couldn't he bring you out to us?"

"He's locked up," said Sapphira, "the door of the cage has a padlock, of which father carries the key, and he's watched all the time by two boys. He couldn't ever get out.

"Poor thing," said the Walrus, "it must be awful to be locked up."

"He doesn't care," said Sapphira, "he's a terribly stupid thing, he sleeps all the time."

Just then a large, brightly colored bird was seen flying towards them. He had a beautiful topknot of green and yellow feathers that shone in the sun, and made him look very grand. He alighted on the sand alongside of Sapphira, and began to smooth out his feathers as if he were very proud of them.

"The Squawking Cockatoo," said the Walrus.

Then they all shouted together, "Good morning, Cockatoo."

The Cockatoo nodded his head very gravely in return, and said,

"What are you all talking about?"

"About Sapphira's coming to pay us a visit and spend the

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day," said the Walrus, "she can't get out to us, and we can't get in to her, and we were just discussing asking the Flying Pig what he could do to help us, but she says he is locked up."

"You can't get the key?" said the Cockatoo to Sapphira. Sapphira shook head.

"And he can't get out unless you do?"

"No," said Sapphira.

"What are the bars of the cage made of?" asked the Cockatoo, thoughtfully.

"Something shiny that looks like gold, but I don't think it is real gold," answered Sapphira.

"You couldn't possibly bite them through with your beak," said the Walrus, "of course they would be too hard for that."

The Cockatoo gave a little strut of pride. "They would have to be much harder than anything I've seen yet," he said.

Sapphira had become very interested now, and she left the fort, and came over to the side of the Cockatoo.

"Oh, Mr. Cockatoo," she said, "if you could only invent a way to get the Flying Pig out of his cage so that I could go and spend the day with the Walruses it would be so splendid. *Do* you think you could?"

The Cockatoo gave a queer, squeaky sound,—Sapphira was not sure whether it was meant to be a laugh or not, it certainly did not sound much like one,—and said,

"You be at the cage at nine to-morrow morning, and we'll see," then spreading his large parti-colored wings he flew away.

Sapphira was so excited that she entirely forgot to notice that the water had gone into the trench around the fort, or that the sand she was standing on was very wet, and that she

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herself would be very wet the next wave that came up. The excitement of spending the day with the Walruses was too much for her, and they were excited too, and bobbed up and down on the waves more wildly than ever. They all shouted to her at once of the pleasures in store for her, but a large wave that curled lovingly around Sapphira's feet, quite wetting her shoes and stockings, brought her to herself reminded her rather unpleasantly that she would probably be scolded when she got home.

She started at once, however, thinking it was better to have it over, and the joy of to-morrow could not be spoiled by a scolding about wet feet. As she went by the Flying Pig's cage, she stopped a minute and asked him if he would like to get out. He looked at her with one eye, the other being closed, and said sleepily,

"I never have been out. Silly girl! you know the cage is locked."

"But would you like to?" persisted Sapphira.

The Pig moved restlessly in the straw. "Don't talk about it, please," he said, "it makes me feel wakeful."

Sapphira laughed and ran off to the house, thinking gleefully how pleased he would be to-morrow.

To-morrow was a beautiful day, and Sapphira was up early, and by nine o'clock was out by the cage, and here a new difficulty appeared for the first time. How was she to distract the attention of the two page boys, while the Squawking Cockatoo bit through the bars? While she was thinking, she suddenly remembered a beautiful pale blue and pink ball that had been given her by her Fairy Godmother on her last birth-

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day. She couldn't tell why she had thought of it, but it seemed almost as though someone had said to her, "Go and get your fairy ball." She brought it out, and invited the boys to a game. The ball, being a fairy one, and knowing perfectly well what was expected of it, led the boys farther and farther away from the cage until they were quite out of sight, and Sapphira, running to the bars, called

"Flying Pig! Flying Pig! wake up. The Squawking Cockatoo is coming, he's going to bite through the bars of your cage, and you are to take me on your back to the Walruses, so that I may spend the day with them. Do you hear, Flying Pig?"

Of course he heard, and he was quite as excited as Sapphira. "And after I've taken you to the Walruses," he said, "may I fly around myself?"

"Yes indeed, you may," said Sapphira, "only you must bring me back by five, so that I won't be missed."

"But *I* shall be missed," said the Flying Pig, very sadly, "No use, Sapphira. When they come out to give me my dinner, they'll find the cage empty, and the magic weathervane would show where I was. I tell you it's no use," and he sank down, and large tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Why couldn't one of the common pigs come in, in your place? I'm sure they would love to spend the day in your cage, and they would never say a word."

The Flying Pig brightened considerably. "That would do," he said. "Could you get one of them up here?"

"Oh, yes," said Sapphira, "I'm sure the fattest one would follow me, he knows me quite well, and oh, *here* is the Squawking Cockatoo."



"SAPPHIRA SEATED ON THE BACK OF THE FLYING PIG"

SAPPHIRA AND THE FLYING PIG

Sure enough, the beautiful bird swooped down like a glittering rainbow on the top of the gilded cage.

"Is everything all ready?" he asked.

Sapphira explained about her having to get the common pig, and the Cockatoo agreed, only saying she must do it at once, as there was not a minute to be lost.

The Fattest Pig was very glad to see Sapphira, and perfectly willing to do as he was told, in fact spending the day in the Flying Pig's cage was the one ambition of his lazy soul. When they got back to the cage, they found the Cockatoo had been as good as his word, and four bars had been bitten through. In less time than it takes to tell, the Flying Pig was out, and the Fattest Pig was in, the bars were replaced, and Sapphira, seated on the back of the Flying Pig, and accompanied by the Squawking Cockatoo, was on her way to the ocean.

They found the Walruses all drawn up in line, just outside the breakers. They had with them a dear little boat, for they pointed out to Sapphira she couldn't sit on their backs without getting very wet, as they swam so low in the water. It was decided that the Flying Pig should be back in that same spot at half-past four, and having planted Sapphira safely in the bottom of the little boat, he flew away with squeals of joy.

The Walruses started immediately, drawing the little boat after them, and they seemed to swim quite a long, long way, till they came to an island that was just covered with walruses of all sizes and shapes. They were perfectly delighted to see Sapphira, and hastened to the water's edge, with shouts of welcome. The wife of the biggest Walrus, who was Sapphira's greatest friend, took charge of the entertainment, and it was she who

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directed the landing of the boat, and made the little speech of welcome to Sapphira.

Then followed a day of such wild gayety that Sapphira thinks she will never forget it, if she lives to be a hundred. The Walruses showed her caves of the most beautiful colors where the mermaids lived. They taught her how to dive off of the rocks, so that she could go straight to the bottom and bring up some of the lovely flowers that grew down there, and Sapphira wondered why she had never been able to do it before, for she had always bathed, but somehow this seemed quite different. Then some of the little Walruses were so funny, the way they tumbled off the rocks, and crawled up again.

In the middle of the day they had dinner, served out on the rocks, and everything was delicious, though Sapphira couldn't tell what one of the dishes was. After dinner the biggest Walrus suggested that they should go and visit the Old Man of the Sea, so Sapphira got into the boat, and the Walruses pulling it, they went quite a long way till they came to a funny little pointed rock that rose right out of the sea, and had a little gold bell hanging on its top. This bell one of the Walruses rang, and then they all waited. Pretty soon there was a sort of a bubbling on the surface of the water near the rock, and a most beautiful mermaid appeared.

When she saw Sapphira she seemed quite pleased, and asked if she were coming down to see the Old Man of the Sea. Sapphira said "yes" and the mermaid took hold of the edge of the boat and said, "shut your eyes," which Sapphira did. She felt the queerest rushing sensation, and the water surged all around her ears, and for a minute she was awfully frightened,

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but the next minute she heard the voice of the mermaid saying, "open your eyes, Sapphira," and she was standing in a gorgeous hall, all mother of pearl in the most lovely colors. They went through this into a large room, and seated on a pink coral throne was the Old Man of the Sea. He was very old, with long gray hair and curling beard, but he had kind eyes, and he was very glad to see Sapphira. He gave her a lovely string of pearls to remember him by, and just as they had begun to be very friendly, and Sapphira was telling him about the Flying Pig and the Squawking Cockatoo, the mermaid came hurrying in.

"The Walruses say you must go, Sapphira," she said. "It is after half-past four, and the Flying Pig has been missed."

Sapphira said "good-bye" hurriedly, took her seat in the boat, and was rushed up again to the surface of the ocean. There were the Walruses in great excitement. The Squawking Cockatoo had come to tell them that the Flying Pig had been missed, and that there was the greatest hullabaloo.

"It appears that the Fattest Pig was fool enough to grunt several times with pleasure over his dinner," said the Cockatoo, severely. "Of course everyone knows that the Flying Pig does not grunt and the page boys gave the alarm at once."

Sapphira was hustled ashore on the back of the Flying Pig, accompanied by the Cockatoo, who wanted to see the end of the fight.

When they reached the cage they found the entire family gathered around, all talking at once, and Sapphira's mother was wringing her hands, in despair, for the little girl had also been missed. The Flying Pig, with Sapphira on his back, floated

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down quietly and remained stationary a little above the top of the cage. One of the page boys looked up and saw him.

"There he is! There he is!" he cried.

"Oh, Flying Pig," said Sapphira's father, "where *have* you been? and Sapphira, too!"

"We've been out," said the Flying Pig, quietly, "and what is more, I'm not coming back unless you promise me that the doors of the cage shall be left unlocked between the hours of two and five every day, so that I may go out. "I'm tired to death of being locked up, and I won't have it."

"It shall be as you wish, Flying Pig, only come back," said Sapphira's father.

"The door of the cage shall be left open?" asked the Pig, still a little suspicious.

"Absolutely open," was the answer.

"And Sapphira may go with me whenever I want to take her?" asked the Pig, coming a little nearer.

"Whenever you want to take her."

"Very well," said the Pig, alighting on the ground, "then we'll come back."

Everyone was so glad to see them that they quite forgot to scold, and from that time the Flying Pig goes out every day, and he almost always takes Sapphira with him, and usually the Squawking Cockatoo goes too.

THE CHRISTMAS TREES

OF course, they were bright. Otherwise they could hardly have been for a Christmas tree. They were twelve in a box, and they ran in twos as to color—by this I mean that there were two blues, two reds, two greens, two silvery, two goldy, and two bright pink. The box was divided into little compartments, one for each ball, and lined with a peculiar, dirty cotton, common to Christmas ornament boxes, and the compartments were meant to keep the balls from knocking against each other and breaking. This it did, but it did not keep them from constantly squabbling, fighting and fussing, which, I am sorry to say, they did all the time.

They stood, or rather their box stood, on a big table with many other ornaments in Wanamaker's big store, and the never-ceasing crowd pushed backwards and forwards by them all the day. They were much admired by all, but no one bought them. It seemed that being rather a high order of ornament they were quite expensive, so they leaned against the edge of the shelf, and shone, glistened, fought and quarreled as to which was the prettier—until the others were tired of hearing them.

A large Santa Claus, resplendent in a red overcoat, stood on the top shelf in the center, trying to keep order, and around him a row of smaller and less magnificent Santa Claus' with black coats, trying to help, but he was not so expensive as the balls, so they paid no heed to him.

“Of course,” said the goldy balls—they always spoke together,—“you may say what you like, but none of you shine as we do.”

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"We think we give a purer and less lurid light," remarked the silver.

"You may do that, but you don't light up as we do," said the red balls.

"And we;" "And we," shouted the others.

"A nice, fat baby just came by on his mother's arm and tried to take me out of the box," said the top pink ball, trembling with pleasure. "I hoped his mother would buy me."

"We are not for sale singly," said the other pink, a little hurt that the baby had not seen him, "besides he would have squeezed you, and broken you, then you might have cut his fingers."

"I shouldn't like to do that," said the first pink ball again, looking anxious. "I hope he won't come again, he might snatch me."

"Don't you worry, if he snatches at all, it will be at us," said the gold balls again.

"Or at us," shouted all the others.

"Ding, dong, peace, peace," rang a bell, which hung on a trimmed tree at the corner of the table, "how you quarrel! Santa Claus, can't you stop them?"

"No," said the old man, sadly, "they don't heed me, they are so noisy."

"Is this the one you mean?" a voice broke through the babble, and a hand took down the box. With one accord the gaily colored balls shivered, and each one closed his or her eyes, afraid to even breathe.

"Yes, thank you. See, Estelle, what pretty ones, and quite unusual," said another voice.

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“Yes, ma’am,” said the shop-girl, “we have only one of these, they are a little higher priced than what we usually carry.”

The balls swelled with pride at this, and then being unable to restrain their curiosity any longer, they opened their eyes, and looked right up into the pale, pretty face of a little girl, who was gazing at them, but with a very small show of interest. Goldy decided she was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen. She wore a black velvet coat, with a wide fur collar, and a big hat with plumes, her fair hair was beautifully curled, and she looked very dainty in the rough crowd. Pinky sighed as he looked at her.

“I would rather be with my baby,” she whispered, “that little girl looks discontented and unhappy.”

They were already on the way to be wrapped up, before they quite took in what had happened. Even then they were so excited they forgot to quarrel.

“I expect we shall be on a very smart tree,” said the green, “and they will take such care of us that we shall last years. I had a friend once who was on the family Christmas tree for five years, and he was not so nice as we are.”

“Oh, they’ll take care of us all right,” said Silver. “Didn’t you hear the lady say we were the prettiest she had seen yet, and so unusual?” And then they all bridled in their snug little compartments.

The night was spent they knew not just where, but in the vicinity of a Christmas tree and greens, for they could hear them whispering, and an occasional whiff of piney smell came under the lid of the box. The morning passed quietly too, their string was untied, and the box looked into by the same lady who had

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bought them, then they were left on the floor with a lot of other boxes and much general conversation took place. The balls felt rather strange and kept very still.

Suddenly there was a great commotion, the room became full of people, all talking at once, and there was hammering and rustling, as the tree was set in place, and the greens tacked on the walls. Then the lid was taken off the box, and the balls saw that they were in a large room, full of people. In the center a great tree stretched its branches, waiting to be trimmed; innumerable bundles tied with bright ribbons were piled around, and the walls were hung with greens and wreaths. Near the tree was "their lady," and it was the little girl who had opened the box. She looked more happy and interested now, and was even more gorgeous than ever, with a velvet frock and lace collar, a big bow on her yellow curls.

"This," said the gold balls, "is richness and luxury. Thank goodness, we were high priced, and came here to live."

The others all agreed, but the pink ball,—she had a little pang of regret when she thought of the fat baby with the bright, earnest little face, and the well-worn worsted hood tied under its fat, chapped chin.

Meanwhile the trimming of the tree progressed rapidly. A great many beautiful and costly things were hung on it, among others our friends, who were prouder than ever, and shone to the best of their ability. Goldy made the acquaintance of a beautiful paper doll, with feather wings and gold paper skirts, who floated on the branch next to him, by the aid of an elastic glued to her shoulder. She was very aristocratic and hard to know, but he glistened his best and swung to and fro with her,

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and was happy. The green balls hung near the top, and were next to a large scarlet ball that came straight from Germany, and only spoke that language; but the greens were very good natured, and as they spoke a little German, they got along famously.

When everything was ready, the people went to get dressed, and left the tree alone in all its grandeur, a big Santa Claus taking charge of the heap of toys piled at its base.

Once alone, the ornaments began to talk, amicably at first, but later, I regret to say, the quarrelling commenced. Goldy began it. He stated in no very agreeable tone that he was glad they were in a house befitting their station.

“Your station, indeed,” said the big spike on the top, “why, you came from Wanamaker’s!”

Absolute silence followed this remark, and the little balls turned cold with fright and shame. Was it then a disgrace to come from Wanamaker’s? The red ball looked pale, and the green balls grew greener still.

“Wanamaker’s is a large department store, is it not, where all sorts of things are sold?” asked a silver horse, who pranced on one of the upper branches.

“Yes,” said its companion, a gold cow, who seemed out of place, hanging as it did head down from a lower branch. “They sell everything from a wardrobe to a rolling pin.”

“They have a lovely toy department,” spoke up a new voice; and looking towards the corner from whence it came they beheld a rather the worse for wear doll. “I have been there often with Estelle, and some of their things are very high priced.”

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(“That,” thought the balls, “is a lovely doll, we will do something for her if we can.”)

“High priced,” said the horse, “were you high priced?” turning a little to the red ball who hung near him.

“We were,” answered all the balls in chorus, “that is why we had not been sold before.”

“Toys,” said a beautiful, soft voice, “toys, be quiet, do you know what we are celebrating?”

“Christmas,” answered several softly.

“Do any of you know what Christmas means?”

A long silence followed, and all eyes turned upward to where the Christmas Angel hung from the ceiling by a broad ribbon tied around its waist. Its arms were outspread above the tree, and its dimpled hand seemed to be showering blessings on all. As no one answered, the Angel went on gravely:

“We are celebrating the birth of Christ. I am the image of the Angel who brought the news, and I come each year to each tree to remind all people that ‘Unto you a Child is born,’ and you all pain me by quarrelling over prices at such a time.”

A sort of shamed silence settled on all the toys. The gold ball glanced at his lady love, but she was looking gravely down into the green below. Then Santa Claus gave himself a little shake.

“You have made us all feel solemn, when we want to be gay,” he said. “Can’t some one start a song?”

“I will,” said the Angel, and he straightway began chanting, “’Twas the Night before Christmas,” and they all joined in; and when it was finished all solemnity had disappeared, and wild gayety and good temper prevailed.

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The evening was a great success. There were a great many people, and much light and laughter. The tree was praised, and our friends came in for their share of the admiration. When the guests had gone, Mrs. Miller called the maids to her.

“Undress the tree in the morning,” she said. “Save the larger balls, the dolls, and the tinsel animals, and throw all the smaller things away. Good-night. Come, Estelle.”

Consternation fell on the ornaments. The larger ones gave sighs of relief, and the smaller ones shudders of horror. The little balls glanced at one another and laughed nervously.

“She cannot mean us,” they said, “we are so beautiful and expensive.” And Pinky thought again of the baby.

“He would never have thrown us away,” she murmured to herself.

The night passed in speculation and very little sleep ; and when the first rays of light peeped in through the shades, one of the balls—a blue one—was discovered on the ground in pieces. He had thrown himself down rather than be thrown away.

The maids came early, and the work of undoing the tree began. Slowly the larger articles, including the tinsel animals, were removed and put away, until nothing remained but a few cheaper paper ornaments and the sad eleven balls, with their pride gone, and their souls humbled to the dust. For they were to be thrown out,—they, the pride of the Christmas tree table, and all their boasts were for nothing. The rich had bought them, and now the rich were throwing them away. The thought of the ash can made them shiver, and the gold ones hoped they would break in the act.

THE CHRISTMAS TREES

* * * *

"I thought Christmas Day was different from other days," remarked a small, ragged boy to a larger, but equally ragged little girl, as they slipped and slid on the icy pavement on Christmas morning, in search of any odd bits that might be left in the ash cans that plentifully sprinkled the edge of the curb at this early hour.

"It is different, someway," answered the small girl, vaguely. "There's presents for some folks and trees, I think it's trees, for others."

"Trees? What for? I don't think a tree is much of a present," sniffed the little boy, contemptuously, "I'd rather have a drum."

"I don't mean a plain tree, Jimmy Tyler, I mean a tree all hung with things made out of shining stuff, and candles, and gold glass balls." Jimmy was struck dumb.

"Gold glass, O my! I aint never seen gold glass," he gasped.

"No, neither have I," answered the sister, "but Billy's Mama says so."

That seemed to be convincing, and they both poked away at the contents of two large ash cans, until a scream from Jimmy caused Sadie to jump almost out of her worn little shoes.

"Look," he said, "is this one of them things?" In his hand he was holding the one remaining blue ball. He had a hole in one side, but he still had courage and tried bravely to shine, even though the dust had enveloped him. Sadie stood spellbound.

"It is one of them," she said. "Oh, who could have thrown it away?"

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"Sadie," screamed Jimmy, "could we take it home and put it on a tree for Billy? We could borrow a candle."

"I'm afraid it would look bad all alone, Jimmy," she said sadly, "but," seeing the intense disappointment she had caused, "we can do it. First, let's hunt through the ashes some more. If they throw one away, there may be others."

The diligent search was rewarded beyond their wildest hope, for not only did the entire eleven appear, all very dusty and broken in spirit and thankful to be able to breathe once more, but also the remains of Goldy's lady love, one wing gone, and her golden skirts in ribbons, but still beautiful in the children's eyes.

While they were contemplating their treasures with joy beyond words, a man came out of the area way, dragging a tremendous Christmas tree after him, which he threw into the gutter and then proceeded to chop up. Sadie watched him silently for a minute, and then with her face pink with the effort, approached him timidly.

"Oh, sir, *could* you chop it so we could have the top?"

The man looked kindly at the two earnest faces, and at the toys in the little cold hands.

"Of course, I could," he said heartily, "how much of the top will you be wanting?"

"Oh, just a little piece," said Sadie. "We haven't very much to put on it."

"How will you carry it?" asked the man, when he had finished.

"On my sled," said Jimmy, exhibiting with pride a box on runners, made by himself.

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"Wait a minute," said the man, after the balls had been carefully stowed away in the bottom on a soft bed of branches, and the tree placed on top. "I have something inside you will like," and going into the house, he reappeared with two bright cornucopias of candy, a nice red apple and an orange.

"Oh, thank you, thank you," cried the children. "What a Christmas Billy will have!"

"Who's Billy?" asked the man.

"He is the baby of our house, his mother rents the back room on the top floor. They're poor, too, and we love Billy."

"Sadie takes care of him in the daytime when his mother gets work, and she's a splendid nurse," said Jimmy with pride. Then with nods and smiles they started. The man watched them until they disappeared, and then with a half sigh returned to his chopping.

"I wish I had asked where they lived, I would like to have seen the tree and Billy," he thought, but it was too late, the ragged pair and the old sled with its cheery burden had gone around the corner.

And what of our friends, the balls, down in their nest of pine boughs? They were too happy to speak. The events of the night passed among ashes and bits of coal had told much on their delicate nerves, and the sudden change to the fragrant bed, with a prospect of another tree ahead of them was as cheering to them as it was to the children. All pride had gone, and there was left only a strong desire to make such a brave appearance that Billy's tree would be the best and brightest in the land, notwithstanding the fact that the ornaments were few.

And it was a bright little tree, set up in a starch box, with



DEATRICE BAXTER TRUHL

"AND IT WAS A BRIGHT LITTLE TREE SET UP IN A STARCH BOX"

THE CHRISTMAS TREES

the balls hung where they showed to the best advantage, and the paper dolly tied fast to the top bough, where her tattered skirts were less noticeable, and no one minded or even thought that she had only one wing. The gold balls glistened as good as new when the dust was rubbed off, and when later the candle had burned out, the apple and the orange had been divided and eaten, and the festivities were over, the little pink ball rejoiced to find herself going to bed with the fat baby ; then clasped tight in the hot little hand and nestling close to the pink cheek, she sent up a little prayer of thanks to the Christmas Angel, which was as near saying real prayers as a Christmas tree ornament ever comes.

MOTHER GOOSE'S PARTY

MOTHER GOOSE had decided to give a party. Not an ordinary affair, by any means, but a *very* extraordinary party. She had been looking down into New York a great deal lately, as she went her rounds on her big white goose, and had seen more than one little boy and girl reading her "Rhymes and Jingles," and heard them exclaim ;
"Oh, how I wish I could go to see Mother Goose, and all the story-people ! "

So Mother Goose had decided to invite the children, that is, the best and nicest only, those who didn't cry when they were being dressed, or when there was no jam for supper. They were to come in the evening, for that is the time when they can reach Fairyland by the shortest way, and she was going to ask all the most interesting people of the "Rhymes and Jingles" to help entertain them.

So pleased was Mother Goose with her plan, that she had to call out to the old woman with the pig who lived next door, and who was cleaning house very hard, always in hopes of finding another silver sixpence, to ask her if she would come and bring her pig.

The old woman thought it would be lovely, and offered to help prepare for the party. She suggested that the Queen of Hearts might give the celebrated tarts by way of refreshments. Mother Goose liked the idea, and decided to send a message to the queen by the very first person who came in. This person happened to be the Maiden All Forlorn, who had just milked

MOTHER GOOSE'S PARTY

her cow, and brought in a nice saucer of milk for Mother Goose's cat, and she offered to go at once and fetch the tarts.

The next people to come were Jack and Jill, with a bucket half full of water. They were now so used to falling down the hill, that they managed to keep a little water in the pail, and they always brought it to Mother Goose, who used it to wash her nice tiled floor. They were crazy about the plan, and promised to do what they could to make it a success.

"We will be here just as early as we can," said Jill, "you know we have to help Bo-peep find her blessed sheep, and, fit on all their tails the first thing in the morning, and it takes a long time."

"Then let them come without their tails, let Bo-peep bring the tails with her," said Mother Goose. "I dare say the children would like that quite as well."

"What are you going to have to eat?" asked Jack, who took a great deal of interest in food.

Mother Goose told them about the tarts, and Jill suggested some of Curlylocks' strawberries and cream, also Tommy Tucker's white and brown bread. Tommy came along just then on his way to the village to buy a knife, and promised to bring plenty of both kinds of bread with him.

"I know something," said Jill, "why don't you get some one to go to the King of the Blackbird Pie, and ask him to give it to us. Even if we didn't eat it, the children would be amused to see it."

"There are two objections to that plan," said Mother Goose, thoughtfully, "one, that it is a very long way to go, and the second, that the top crust of the pie is broken, and the King

MOTHER GOOSE'S PARTY.

won't have it mended because now the four-and-twenty black birds can sing all day long. It would spoil the looks to have no top on the pie."

"Oh, I should think that could be managed," said Jack, "the maid's good-natured, that is, if she has the tip of her nose. Perhaps she would make a new top."

"Well, that doesn't solve the question of getting the pie," said Jill, settling herself on the kitchen table, and swinging her feet. "I tell you who runs fast, Tom, Tom, the Piper's son."

"But he'd never be able to bring the pie back," said Mother Goose, "he always has the pig to carry. Since they killed the first pig he doesn't dare put this one down. But never mind, Jill, I'll find some way of getting it. I'm going out now, and I will look."

"We must go, too," said Jack and Jill, "or Bo-peep will be screaming. There she is now," and sure enough along the road, preceded by a sound of loud weeping, came Bo-peep, wringing her hands.

"Oh, Bo-peep, do stop crying a minute, and listen, and I'll tell you what a beautiful plan Mother Goose has. She is to give a party to all the children in New York, and you're to come." Bo-peep looked pleased for a minute, then began to cry again.

"What good am I," she sobbed, "at any party, without my sheep?"

"But we'll find your sheep," said Jack, "don't we find them for you every day? To-day won't be any different. Come on, Jill," and each taking one of Bo-peep's hands, and

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waving gaily to Mother Goose, they dragged her off down the hill.

Mother Goose started across the fields on her goose, turning over in her mind the different people who might go for the blackbird pie. Suddenly she came upon a haycock and under it, sound asleep, with his head resting on his arm, was Little Boy Blue. Mother Goose dismounted, and picking up the horn that lay alongside of him, gave him a good rap over the head with it. Boy Blue woke up with a lazy yawn, and said :

"You let me alone." When he saw who it was, he jumped to his feet, and bowed very politely, for most of the Fairyland children were afraid of Mother Goose when she was cross.

"Boy Blue, will you do something for me?" asked Mother Goose, and she told him about the pie. "How can you get it? The palace is such a long way off."

"I can do it," said Boy Blue, cheerfully and pleasantly, "I can take Baa, Baa, Black Sheep out of the lane. He goes, by the King's palace every day, with wool for My Lady."

Mother Goose was pleased at Boy Blue's willingness to do the errand, and left him with a warning to "be quick." Boy Blue started at once for the lane, and sure enough, there was Baa, Baa, Black Sheep trotting along. He consented to take Boy Blue on his back to the King's palace. So they started, and were there within an hour, as Black Sheep could travel very quickly when he wanted to. When they arrived, Boy Blue ran in, and found the King in his counting-house, just as he expected. Boy Blue explained to him about the party, and the King said he would gladly give the pie, but spoke of its not having a top. Then he said he thought the maid would make a new one, and

MOTHER GOOSE'S PARTY

Boy Blue ran to ask her if she would. She was very good-natured that morning, the dicky-bird having let her nose alone, and she consented to make one right away.

Then came the difficulty of carrying the pie, which was very large and heavy, to Mother Goose's house, but here the Queen came to the rescue. She had offered some of her bread and honey to the party, and she suggested that Cinderella would probably let Boy Blue have her pumpkin coach to drive back in.

"You know," said the Queen, "she sends her coach into the village every day, to drive past the house where the proud sisters live so as to make them envious, and as it is empty, Boy Blue might just as well ride in it."

While the maid baked the top of the pie Boy Blue went at once to ask Cinderella about it. She lived quite close to the palace, so he wasn't long finding her. On the way he met Simple Simon, who was going fishing, and told him about the party, and Simon was so simple that he promised a great many fish, out of his mother's pail, for the feast.

Cinderella was very glad to see Boy Blue. She said she would be at the party, and bring her glass slippers, and as the coach was just starting, she was delighted to have Boy Blue use it. By the time he had returned to the palace the maid had put a lovely fancy top on the pie,—with "Mother Goose" written in large letters upon the crust,—and Boy Blue put it very carefully on the seat opposite to him in Cinderella's pumpkin coach. The drive back was pretty tiresome, for the pie seemed excited at the prospect of the party, and kept sliding backwards and forwards on the seat, in a most annoying way,



"AND THEY HAD SUCH A GOOD TIME"

MOTHER GOOSE'S PARTY

and once it nearly bounced out the window, and Boy Blue had to push it back so hard that all the four and twenty blackbirds began to twitter very angrily,—they did not like being bounced,—but they got home at last without accident.

The children arrived at half past eight, and were much interested to see Mother Goose's kitchen, her cat, the celebrated goose, and Bo-peep's sheep, which were all there, just as Jack said they would be. Of course their tails weren't fitted on, but this made it all the more interesting. For the children could put the tails on themselves. Bo-peep was so tired doing it, she was glad enough to let them. They visited Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary's garden, and she gave them each a silver bell, with their names written on, to take home.

When supper time came, there was a great deal of excitement as to what there would be to eat, and perhaps you can imagine how the children all felt, when the four-and-twenty blackbirds popped up their heads and sang a cheery welcome to the fairy world. They had all the things to eat that they had read about for years, and they had such a good time that they were ready to cry when the bull tolled the big bell to tell them it was time to go home.

Mother Goose promised them to have another party sometime, but she seems to have forgotten,—at least we have never been asked!

THE END

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